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ABSTRACT

A study at Hawaii Pacific University investigated the use of collaborative peer feedback to improve student performance in an intermediate English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) writing course. Subjects were 53 students of widely varying language backgrounds in three class sections. Each section received differential preparation for peer feedback: (1) minimal introduction in peer feedback and a handout; (2) a combination of lecture and discussion, videotaped demonstrations, and student role-playing; and (3) extensive lecture and discussion supported by handouts. Surveys measured student attitudes toward writing in English and peer work in weeks 2 and 11. Three volunteer pairs of students in each section were recorded in peer feedback sessions, and interactions were coded and analyzed. Essay drafts from all sections before and after feedback sessions were also analyzed. Results show that students became less comfortable working with others during the writing process, but this was not considered a disadvantage. Variation in student interaction in peer feedback sessions appeared more closely related to student personalities and experience than to instruction. All groups increased the number of significant changes in essay drafts as their experience with peer feedback increased. The questionnaires are appended. (MSE)

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ED 427 530

Teaching Collaborative Feedback Strategies in Intermediate Writing

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Presented at TESOL '98, Seattle, Washington

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Excellence in writing is crucial for ESL students in Higher Education. While peer feedback is an important component of the process approach to writing, many writing teachers at the intermediate level find that students are not able to give effective peer feedback. Rather, they usually concentrate on local errors such as grammar, punctuation, and spelling and rarely give useful feedback on content or organization. This has been a source of frustration for teachers and learners alike. Learners don't feel comfortable in peer feedback situations, or they don't see the value of feedback. Perhaps this is because they don't know how to give effective peer feedback.

The use of peer feedback in ESL writing classes has increased with the popularity of teaching process writing. However, the impact of peer feedback on revision compared to other types of input, such as comments by teachers or tutors, had not been thoroughly investigated until a recent study by Connor and Asenavage (1994). Their study of 8 ESL students in a freshman composition course used a useful method of analyzing revision changes developed Faigley and Witte, which distinguished four types of revisions, and which was adopted in this study. Their findings showed a very low percentage of revisions (5%) as a result of peer feedback, with 35% of the revisions resulted from teacher comments, and the remaining revisions (60%) were the result of self-corrections or tutoring help. Connor and Asenavage also noted that the type of revisions and attention to peer feedback or teacher comments varied greatly from student to student.

Perhaps the expectations of students in ESL writing classes differ from those of native English speaking students in writing classes. A survey of 81 ESL students of varying proficiency, by Shuqiang Zhang (1995), showed a strong preference (93.8% of respondents) for teacher feedback over nonteacher feedback. When asked to choose between peer feedback and self-directed feedback, 60.5% chose peer feedback. Zhang discusses the possibility that cultural background and expectations could be related to resistance to peer feedback. In Zhang's study, 86.4% of the

respondents were from Asian countries. Another study by Joan G. Carson and Gayle L. Nelson (1996) looked into the styles of interactions of Chinese-speaking students, compared to Spanish-speaking students. This study concluded that the Chinese students were reluctant to speak in peer feedback because of their desire to "maintain group harmony" (1996, p. 7). The Spanish-speaking students were, in contrast, more focused on the task, and put the task of discussion and helping improve the essay above social considerations.

Even though some ESL students, whether because of cultural background or educational experience, indicate preferences for teacher feedback or see teacher comments as more valuable than peer feedback, the fact is that students receive fewer teacher comments as they advance into mainstream academic settings. It is to the students' advantage to learn how to get the most from peer feedback, and also how to help their peers in giving appropriate feedback.

The level of proficiency of English of ESL students and the actual language used by students in a peer feedback group could certainly affect the success of a peer feedback session. Charles Lockhart and Peggy Ng (1995) studied the language used in peer feedback sessions of 27 dyads from three ESL writing courses, while they discussed a first draft. Students received one training sessions on peer feedback before working in pairs on their own writing. They identified "four categories of reader stances—authoritative, interpretive, probing, and collaborative—with operational definitions of each stance" (1995, p. 614). The study found that nine of the participants used an authoritative stance, six used an interpretive stance, nine used a probing stance, and three used a collaborative stance. Lockhart and Ng conclude, "Various factors change the dynamics of a learning process, including: students' level of understanding, their language skills, and their perceptions of the purpose and value of the task" (1995, p. 645). They also concluded that there were more benefits gained from the probing and collaborative stances, including encouraging the writer to express and clarify their intended meaning, allowing the writer

to see how their writing affects the reader, and allowing the reader and writer to use negotiation to develop ideas (1995).

The research indicates a need to teach students how to participate in peer feedback sessions and how to use a probing or collaborative stance in peer feedback interaction. Strategies-based instruction as defined by Andrew Cohen (1990) has been applied to basic language skills acquisition. The same principle my be applicable to other classroom activities that are not language skills per se. Most research on how best to teach peer feedback strategies has been done with advanced ESL learners. Jane Stanley (1992) conducted a study in which two levels of instruction in peer feedback strategies were given to two freshman ESL composition classes. One group received about 7 hours of instruction, which included study of the "genre of the student essay", and the best method of expressing the strengths and weaknesses of others' writing in English. The students also did role plays, then discussed both "successful and unsuccessful communications" (1992, p.221). The second group received only one hour of instruction, during which two instructors demonstration a peer-evaluation session and discussed it with the students. Analysis of revisions in the students' essays and recorded peer feedback sessions showed that the group that received extensive instruction produced a higher number of revisions which had been pointed out during the peer feedback session (1992).

ESL students need extensive instruction in the appropriate language for peer feedback and methods to evaluate other students' writing. Can strategy-based instruction maximize ESL students' use of a collaborative stance in peer feedback situations? What instructional modalities yield the best results?

METHOD

The Students

The study focused on three different sections of intermediate-level ESL composition (EFP 127) in the English Foundations Program (EFP) at Hawaii Pacific University, Honolulu, Hawaii. Students were either placed into the level based on testing following entry into HPU or advanced from the previous level of composition. Students chose their own sections based on convenience or choice of instructor. The class met three 55-minute periods each week over a 14-week semester. Two of the sections met at the same mid-morning time, and the third met in the late morning. Sections had been chosen for the study based on the instructors' willingness to participate in the study and the investigators' ability to observe. The first languages of students were as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Comparison of Groups

Group	Language (number of speakers)
Group A (Control) 17 students	Japanese (9), Cantonese (3), Korean (3), French (2), Kurdish (1), Mandarin (1), Tongan (1)
Group B (Modeling/Role-play) 19 students	Korean (5), Japanese (4), Mandarin (2), Burmese (1), Cantonese (1), French (1), Greek (1), Indonesian (1), Kurdish (1), Spanish (1), Thai (1)
Group C (Lecture/Handouts) 17 students	Japanese (3), Korean (2), Cantonese (2), Mandarin (2), Swedish (2), Thai (2), Cambodian (1), Indonesian (1), Romanian (1), Russian (1)

Preparation for Peer Feedback

Students in each section received different preparation for peer feedback. In Group A, the teacher gave only minimal introduction to peer feedback and students were guided by handouts in their feedback process. In Group B, the teacher (one of the investigators) prepared students for peer feedback through a combination of lecture/discussion, video-taped demonstrations, and student

role play with "model" writing. In Group C, the teacher prepared students for peer feedback through extensive lecture/discussion supported by handouts.

Treatment 1: Group A (Control)

There was no formal introduction to peer feedback given to the class. During the second week of the semester, the instructor handed out a peer feedback sheet (Appendix A) and assigned students to work in pairs to help each other with their first draft of their first paragraph. Students were encouraged to talk to each other as well as to write on the feedback sheet. Students were given approximately 30 minutes to complete the activity. Students were then given until the next class to rewrite their essay. This process was repeated for each of four essays written outside of class during the semester, for a total of five feedback sessions.

Treatment 2: Group B (Modeling/Role-play)

The introduction to peer feedback began during the third week of the 14-week semester as students were working with a single paragraph. The were briefly introduced to the idea of peer feedback in 10-minute lecture, watched and discussed a 10-minute video of the two investigators doing peer feedback on a "model" paragrah using a collaborative stance, role-played a similar interaction based on another model paragraph, and then had time for peer feedback on their own paragraphs. Five class periods later, as the students were preparing their first essay, a second preparation session was held focusing on introductory and concluding paragraphs for essays developed from the first paragraphs, using a similar format to the first session. Four class periods later, students reviewed peer feedback principles again, using another "model" of a whole essay on a topic similar to the one they were working on. This time, the class identified problems with the "model" draft and then pairs of students did another role-play collaborative peer feedback on the draft. During the next class period, students were given the opportunity to do peer feedback on their own essays. This

peer feedback was the basis for the first set of taped interaction for this section, and the drafts used in this peer feedback session and their subsequent revisions were analyzed for Essay 1.

About two weeks following the peer feedback for Essay 1, students in this section were given a brief review of the principles of peer feedback and had a chance for peer feedback on their second essay, which was not analyzed for this study. After two more weeks, as the students completed their drafts for their third essay, the class reviewed the principles of peer feedback, watched a five-minute video in which the investigators modeled appropriate peed feedback, and then role-played peer feedback in pairs. During the next class period, the students did peer feedback on their own essay. This feedback was the basis for the second set of tapes and the second set of essays.

Throughout this process, approximately three hours was spent in lecture, modeling, and role play, and 20 to 30 minutes was spend in each of three peer feedback sessions.

Treatment 3: Group C (Lecture/Handouts)

Throughout the semester, the instructor employed lecture/discussion to explain the principles of collaborative peer feedback. Her lectures were developed in cooperation with the investigators and focused on the same points as those brought up under Treatment 2. The same "model" essays were used with students using a teacher directed approach in analyzing the essays and suggesting changes to content and organization, and handouts were developed to reinforce the points being made in the lectures. Attention was given to providing the same frequency of instruction as with the modeling/role-play in Treatment 2. The total time spent in lecture/discussion was approximately 30 minutes each, for a total of 90 minutes, in addition to five peer feedback sessions of 20 minutes each.

COLLECTION OF DATA

Attitudinal Surveys

Surveys measuring the attitude of students toward writing in English and peer work in writing were distributed during the week 2 and week 11 of the semester. The first survey consisted of 14 questions and the second survey had 13 questions. The students completed the survey voluntarily and anonymously, circling a number from one to four to indicate a level of agreement (Appendices B and C).

Tape Recordings Of Dyads

The investigators recruited three volunteer pairs of students in each group to be recorded during the three feedback sessions. Some students were absent during peer feedback sessions, but seven of the nine pairs remained constant during all three peer feedback sessions. The first feedback session recordings were not analyzed due to poor sound quality. Better microphones were used during the second and fourth feedback sessions, so that accurate analysis was possible. A total of 18 taped sessions were analyzed.

A rating instrument was developed based on four categories of feedback style by readers, called "stances" by Lockhard and Ng (1995). These four stances are authoritative, interpretive, probing, and collaborative. In the authoritative stance, "the reader appropriates the writer's draft with little or no reference to the writer's intent; in the interpretive stance, the reader provides a personal interpretation of the text; in the probing stance, the reader elicits the writer's intended meaning; in the collaborative stance, the reader works with the writer to build and discover meaning" (1995, p. 614). Frequency of each stance used by the reader in each turn was counted. A turn was defined as one speaker talking or asking about one part of the essay. The response of the writer to the

reader's comment or questions was also coded from four categories: rejects/negative response, accepts/positive response, neutral/silent, changes topic. Writers' soliciting comments from the reader were also coded into five categories: open solicitation, solicits judgment, solicits ideas, solicits clarification, or solicits grammar help. Off-task comments by both readers and writers were counted, as well. The overall stance of the reader was also assigned by the rater, based both on frequency of stances taken and length of turns in this stance.

Each investigator independently coded four taped sessions, and the ratings were compared. When number of turns and type of stance by the reader both were considered, inter-rater reliability was 55%. For this reason, it was agreed that one investigator would score all 18 tape recordings for consistency.

Drafts

The investigators photocopied drafts from before and after peer feedback sessions when the instructors of those sections collected the essays for grading. Some students missed peer feedback sessions, and others did not turn in the draft used for peer feedback with the draft to be graded. In addition, a few essays were unsuitable for analysis because of poor copies or missing pages. Table 2 shows the total number of analyzable essays and the number of students for which both essay 1 and essay 3 were available in each section.

Table 2
Number of Analyzable Essays for Each Group

	Essay 1	Essay 3	Both Essays
Group A	11	16	9
Group B	13	12	9
Group C	8	12	5

RESULTS

Attitudinal Surveys

Table 3 summarizes the responses to two questionnaires which measured attitudes of students toward writing and peer feedback, and self-identification of problems in writing.

Table 3
Summary of Responses to Attitudinal Surveys

1=none/not at all/poor 2=a little/fair 3=some/good 4=a lot/excellent

Pre-Feedback Activity Questionnaire	Group A (n=19)	Group B (n=18)	Group C (n=15)
Enjoy working with other students	3.05	3.33	2.87
Like it when students read your writing	2.79	3.00	2.80
Like to read other students' writing	2.95	3.22	2.87
Like to express your ideas in writing	2.95	3.17	3.13
Make changes to writing by yourself	2.79	2.89	3.07
Important to be able to write well	3.58	3.78	3.80
Have trouble getting good ideas to write about	3.11	3.22	2.60
Have trouble organizing ideas	3.05	2.83	2.93
Have trouble finding right words	3.16	3.33	2.87
Have trouble using correct grammar	3.11	3.06	3.13
Quality of writing	2.16	2.33	2.27
In past, have helped other students learn Eng.	2.16	1.83	2.27
In past, have read students' writing	2.32	2.06	2.27
In past, have helped improve others' writing	1.79	1.28	1.73

Post Feedback Activity Questionnaire	Group A (n=16)	Group B (n=18)	Group C (n=13)
Enjoy working with other students	3.06	3.17	2.92
Like it when students read your writing	3.13	3.44	3.23
Like to read other students' writing	3.06	3.61	3.23
Like to express your ideas in writing	3.25	3.17	3.54
Make changes to writing by yourself	3.00	3.28	3.23
Important to be able to write well	3.69	3.83	3.77
Have trouble getting good ideas	2.75	3.06	3.23
Have trouble organizing ideas	3.13	2.83	2.85
Have trouble finding right words	3.06	3.06	3.15
Have trouble using correct grammar	3.06	3.17	3.38
Quality of writing	2.56	2.44	2.38
Can help others through peer feedback	2.50	2.72	2.69
Think talking to others improves writing	2.63	3.22	2.92

Changes in Pre and Post Questionnaire	Group A	Group B	Group C
Enjoy working with other students	-0.01	+0.17	-0.06
Like it when students read your writing	-0.34	-0.44	-0.43
Like to read other students' writing	-0.12	-0.39	-0.36
Like to express your ideas in writing	-0.30	0.00	-0.41
Make changes to writing by yourself	-0.21	-0.39	-0.16
Important to be able to write well	-0.11	-0.06	+0.03

Have trouble getting good ideas	+0.36	+0.17	-0.63
Have trouble organizing ideas	-0.07	0.00	+0.09
Have trouble finding right words	+0.10	+0.28	-0.29
Have trouble using correct grammar	+0.04	-0.11	-0.25
Quality of writing	-0.40	-0.11	-0.12

The surveys administered at the beginning of the semester, before any writing or peer feedback activities, show that all three groups shared similar attitudes in enjoying group work, recognizing the importance of writing well in English, and recognition of common problems in writing. All three groups also indicated that they had little experience in helping other students with their writing, with Group B showing the lowest level of experience reported. (Group A: 1.79, Group B: 1.28, and Group C: 1.73). The second survey, which was administered near the end of the semester, showed some changes in attitude, which could indicate a reaction to the activities in the class, especially toward peer feedback. Group B was the only group that indicated a positive, although small, change in "Enjoy working with other students" (+0.17). All three groups showed a large drop in response to the two questions "Like it when students read your writing" and "Like to read other students' writing" (Group A: -0.34 and -0.12; Group B: -0.44 and -0.39; Group C: -0.43 and -0.36). Groups B and C, where more instruction and emphasis was given to peer feedback methods, showed the largest negative change. Attitude toward writing in general and confidence in writing also seems to have decreased in most of the groups. Only Group B showed no change in response to "Like to express your ideas in writing", while Group A showed a decrease of -0.30, and Group C showed a decrease of -0.41. All three groups showed a decrease in the response to "Quality of writing" (Group A: -0.40; Group B: -0.11; Group C: -0.12). In the four questions asking students to rate trouble areas in writing: getting good ideas, organizing ideas, finding right words, and using correct grammar, we would expect negative numbers, which would show a decrease in perceived trouble in these areas at the end of the writing class. However, only Group C showed negative responses in three of the four questions. Two additional questions were asked on the post-class questionnaire. Groups B and C showed slightly higher ratings to the two statements, "Can help others through peer feedback" (2.72 and 2.69 respectively), and "Think talking to other improves writing" (3.22 and 2.92 respectively), than Group A (2.50 and 2.63).

None of the groups had a large enough number of respondents to determine if these differences were statistically significant.

The negative change in student responses to the questions regarding reading other students' writing could indicate a discomfort by some student with the peer feedback method used in all three classes. Students may realize, during the peer feedback process, that a lot of what they say is not clear to the reader, and thus gain a more realistic view of the problems with their writing. Since the largest negative changes occurred in the two treatment groups (Groups B and C), the amount of time and effort spent on peer feedback method instruction and practice could have conflicted with student expectations of a writing class, which, according to findings by Zhang (1995), would include mostly teacher feedback rather than peer feedback. The overall increase in rating the severity of trouble areas in writing also indicates an increase in awareness of the problems involved in the task of writing. Although the treatment groups (Groups B and C) showed a slightly higher rating for the statements regarding the value of peer feedback, this contradicts the positive responses to earlier questions regarding reading other students' writing. In depth interviews with students, preferably by a neutral interviewer, would perhaps give clearer answers to the attitudes of students to peer feedback activities.

Tape Recordings Of Dyads

Table 4
Number of Turns for Each Type of Stance

6 participants (3 pairs) recorded in each group during two separate peer feedback sessions.

Group/Date	Authoritative	Interpretive	Probing	Collaborative	Overall Stance
Group A/essay 1	6	6	10	2	4 Interp/2 Prob
Group A/essay 3	3	7	11	4	1 Interp/3 Prob
Group B/essay 1	2	22	10	8	1 Auth/3 Inter/2 Prob
*Group B/essay 3	15	15	10	9	1A/2 Int/1 Pro/2 Coll
Group C/essay 1	13	11	7	2	3 Inter/ 2 Prob/1 Coll
*Group C/essay3	9	10	13	3	4 Inter/1 Prob/1 Coll

*Note: Changes in one of three pairs for last peer feedback session. In Group B, the new pair accounted for 13 of the 15 authoritative turns, 6 of the 15 interpretive turns, 3 of the 10 probing turns, and 1 of the 9 collaborative turns. In Group C, the new pair accounted for 4 of the 9 authoritative turns, 2 of the 10 interpretive turns, 5 of the 13 probing turns, and 0 of the 3 collaborative turns.

The general trend in frequency of use of stances is that Authoritative and Interpretive stances decreased between essay 1 and essay 3 peer feedback sessions, with the exception of the new dyad in Group B. The number of Probing and Collaborative stances increased in each group. The lower number of total turns in each stance catagory in Group A is because students were spending more time writing their comments on the feedback form instead of talking with each other.

Table 5
Reaction by Writers to Stances Taken by Readers

Stance	No. of Reader Turns	Positive/Accepting Response	Neutral/Silent Response	Negative/Rejecting Response
Authoritative	48	20 (42%)	17 (35%)	11 (23%)
Interpretive	71	44 (62%)	23 (32%)	4 (6%)
Probing	61	49 (80%)	10 (16%)	2 (3%)
Collaborative	26	25 (96%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)

The reaction by writers to an Authoritative stance was rejected or responded to negatively in 23% of the turns, while the response by writers to Probing and Collaborative stances was almost always positive.

Of the 14 students who were recorded during both essay 1 and essay 3 peer feedback sessions, only four students changed their stances to a degree that their overall stance rating changed. Of these four students, two changed from Interpretive to Probing overall stances, and the other two changed from Probing to Interpretive overall stances. The student who was Authoritative, remained Authoritative. None of the 14 students who were recorded twice were rated overall as Collaborative; four were consistently Interpretive overall; five students were consistently Probing overall.

The recording of dyads during essay 1 and essay 3 peer feedback sessions showed a general reduction by readers in the use of Authoritative and Interpretive stances and an increase in the use of Probing and Collaborative stances. The control group (Group A) and the treatment groups (Groups B and C) did not have significantly different increases in the use of particular stances,

despite the time spent teaching these stances to both treatment groups. It is difficult to determine the reason for the change in stance type. It could be due to the frequent rejection or negative response to Authoritative and Interpretive stances by the writers or to the classroom instruction. Personality and relationships between students in the dyads also seem to play an important role in the stance taken by each student, which was also found to be true in Lockhart and Ng's study (1995). One student who was rated overall as using a Probing stance with one partner, changed to a strong overall Authoritative stance when his partner changed. The new partner also took a strong Authoritative stance during the peer feedback session. Perhaps the degree of comfort or familiarity with a partner in peer feedback, combined with personality, are two factors that determine the stance taken as much as any type of instruction in stances for peer feedback.

Drafts

The two drafts for each essay were compared and each change between the first and second draft was identified using a form which recorded the type of change and whether the change improved the writing, made it worse, or was neither better nor worse. Following the taxonomy based on Faigley and Witte (1981) which Connor and Asenavage (1994) used, changes were divided into surface changes (formal changes and meaning preserving changes) and text-based changes (microstructure changes and macrostructure changes). Formal changes included grammar changes (tense, number, voice or word form) and form changes (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and format). Meaning preserving changes included additions, deletions, substitutions, permutations, distributions or consolidations of words, phrases, or sentences that did not lead to a change in meaning. Microstructure changes were those changes that led to a change in meaning but not a change in the whole summary of the essay, and macrostructure changes were changes that resulted in a change in the summary of the essay. Both microstructure and macrostructure changes could involve additions, deletions, substitutions, permutations, distributions or consolidations.

Each of the investigators coded four different essays using the form, and these were discussed until there was an agreement. Then, each investigator independently analyzed 12 essays, and the ratings were compared. When both the specific type and quality of change were considered, inter-rater reliability was only about 33%, but when only the large categories (formal changes, meaning-preserving changes, microstructure changes, and macrostructure changes) were considered, this increased to about 72%. Given the individual judgment involved in deciding whether a change made the essay better or worse, it was not unexpected that the detailed analysis would yield so much disagreement. For this reason, it was agreed that one investigator would score all of the essays. This investigator then scored all 72 essays.

Because of the differences in the number of analyzable drafts in each class and from the first to the third essays in the same class, we believe that the fairest comparison could be made using only those students for whom we had analyzable drafts for both essay. Figure xx shows the average number of changes per essay for the four main categories of changes: formal, meaning preserving, microstructure, and macrostructure.

Table 6
Average Number of Changes per Essay in Each Category

Section Essay	Formal Changes	Meaning-Preserving Changes	Microstructure Changes	Macrostructure Changes	Total Changes
Group A: Essay 1	7.2	4.2	3.1	1.1	15.7
Essay 3	14.0	6.8	9.1	0.0	29.9
Group B: Essay 1	3.6	9.8	8.1	0.8	22.2
Essay 3	6.4	7.8	9.6	0.9	24.7
Group C: Essay 1	3.6	2.2	3.4	1.0	10.2
Essay 3	9.6	7.4	8.4	0.0	25.4

Note: Table 6 includes students from whom drafts were collected for both essays in each class.

The most obvious difference among the three groups is the high total number of changes made per draft for the first essay in the group which received the demonstration/role-play introduction to peer feedback (22.2/draft for this group as opposed to 15.7 for the group receiving little introduction and 10.2 for the group introduced through lecture/discussion). This indicates that students were able to come up to speed on the peer feedback process more rapidly with that introduction. By the time of the third essay, the other groups had a greater number of changes per essay. However, within in each group, the changes were distributed differently among the four main types.

This difference in the way changes were distributed among the four main types illustrates a second difference among the four groups. Group B consistently had a lower proportion of changes in formal category (16.0% for the first essay and 26.1% for the second essay, as opposed to 46.1% and 46.8% for Group A and 35.3% and 37.8% for Group C). This group also averaged about 1 macrostructure change for both the first and second essays while the other groups had about 1 change for the first essay and none for the second. Many of the macrostructure changes for the first essay of the other two groups came because students had not written introductory or concluding paragraphs on their first drafts (9 of 10 changes for Group A).

It is also interesting to note that for all three groups, the number of meaning-preserving and microstructure changes per essay was very similar for the third essay. While Group B still had more of these changes, on average, per draft, the difference is less than 1.5 changes per draft in each of these categories.

CONCLUSION

Because of the small number of students involved in each class, it is difficult to draw any strong conclusions from the study. This was somewhat compounded by the difficulties in collecting data,

both for the dyads and drafts. However, we do believe that the results shows some trends which may inform the use of peer feedback in ESL writing classes.

The attitudinal survey indicates that students became less comfortable working with others during the course of the writing process. This fits with the conclusions of other researchers that students prefer teacher feedback. However, in an academic writing program, students need to become more independent writers, and peer feedback is an important method for developing greater independence. In addition, students do recognize that peer feedback can help them. In addition, the peer feedback process seems to help students develop a clearer understanding of the inadequacy of their writing. Such realization is the first step towards improvement. Therefore, we urge teachers to persevere in peer feedback instruction.

The analysis of the taped dyads shows, first of all, the variation in types of comments and talk students engage in. Indeed, student personalities and experience seen to be more important than the type of instruction they received in determining the type of interaction that occurs in dyads. In addition, the tapes showed development in the types of language available to students and a progression towards a collaborative approach. It takes time for students to develop these skills, but development does occur over time.

Analysis of the drafts shows that all groups increased the number of significant changes made in drafts as they had more and more experience with peer feedback. The higher number of changes in the first essay for Group B indicates that demonstration and role play provide an effective introduction to peer feedback which can help intermediate-level ESL students become more comfortable with the process in a shorter period of time and yield more changes of the desired type in the revision process. The fact that the difference in the kind and number of changes decreases over time indicates that practice and familiarity with the process are key factors in the effective use of peer feedback. Teachers should provide extensive preparation prior to the use of real peer

feedback, and they should not be discouraged when students have difficulty with their first attempts at using peer feedback.

Overall, results indicate that it is possible for intermediate-level students to learn the language and attitudes necessary for effective peer feedback. Because development of peer feedback is a long process, it is important for teachers and ESL programs to begin teaching peer feedback strategies early in their writing programs. When designing materials for teaching peer feedback, the use of modeling and role play have been shown to be effective, and we encourage their use, especially as students are introduced to the process. Finally, we encourage teachers to moniter students as they do peer feedback to be aware of any difficulties groups may be having and to deal with any personality issues that may be interfering with individual groups.

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Appendix A: Peer Feedback sheet for Group A

EFP 127 Composition II

Classification Composition Peer Evaluation

Name of Writer: _____

Name of Reader: _____

1. Copy the thesis statement of the composition.

2. Underline the main topic, circle the principle, and double underline each category.

3. Is it an appropriate thesis complete with each part? YES NO

   If not, what is missing? TOPIC PRINCIPLE CATEGORIES

4. Outline the categories with details of each body paragraph.

   I.
   - A.
   - B.
   - C.

   II.
   - A.
   - B.
   - C.

   III.
   - A.
   - B.
   - C.

5. What can be added to each body paragraph to improve it? Make one suggestion for each body paragraph.

   I.

   II.

   III.

6. In your opinion, what are two interesting parts of the essay?

Appendix B: Attitudinal Survey (Week 7)

This semester, we will be studying some sections of EFP 127 to learn more about how students learn to write well. Please help us by circling the word or phrase that best describes your response to these questions and statements. The survey is anonymous, so please do not put your name on the paper.

1. In the past, have you helped other students with their learning English?

1	2	3	4
none	a little	some	a lot

2. In the past, have you read other students' writing?

1	2	3	4
none	a little	some	a lot

3. In the past, have you helped other students improve their writing?

1	2	3	4
none	a little	some	a lot

4. Do you enjoy working with other students in a group?

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

5. Do you like it when other students read and comment on your writing?

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

6. Do you like to read other students' writing?

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

7. Do you like to express your ideas in writing?

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

8. When you are writing, do you make many changes by yourself before you hand your assignment in to the teacher?

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

9. How important is being able to write well in English to your future?

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

10. When I write in English, I have trouble with getting good ideas to write on.

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

11. When I write in English, I have trouble with organizing my ideas.

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

12. When I write in English, I have trouble with finding the right words to express my ideas.

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

13. When I write in English, I have trouble with using correct grammar.

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

14. I think my English writing is generally:

1	2	3	4
poor	fair	good	excellent

Appendix C: Attitudinal Survey (Week 11)

This semester, we have been studying some sections of EFP 127 to learn more about how students learn to write well. Please help us by circling the word or phrase that best describes your response to these questions and statements. The survey is anonymous, so please do not put your name on the paper.

1. Do you enjoy working with other students in a group?

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

2. Do you like it when other students read and comment on your writing?

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

3. Do you like to read other students' writing?

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

4. Do you like to express your ideas in writing?

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

5. When you are writing, do you make many changes by yourself before you hand your assignment in to the teacher?

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

6. How important is being able to write well in English to your future?

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

7. When I write in English, I have trouble with getting good ideas to write on.

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

8. When I write in English, I have trouble with organizing my ideas.

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

9. When I write in English, I have trouble with finding the right words to express my ideas.

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

10. When I write in English, I have trouble with using correct grammar.

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

11. I think I can help other students improve their writing through peer feedback.

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

12. I think talking to other students about my writing will help me to improve my writing.

1	2	3	4
not at all	a little	some	a lot

13. I think my English writing is generally:

1	2	3	4
poor	fair	good	excellent

Thank you for your help with our study.

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